

INTERNATIONAL CITY MANAGERS' ASSOCIATION  
1313 EAST 60TH STREET - CHICAGO 37, ILLINOIS

Route To: \_\_\_\_\_

Return To: \_\_\_\_\_

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## FORMULA FOR INSTALLATION OF STREET LIGHTS

What factors should be considered by a city in determining priority in street light installations?

When should a street light be installed? Residents of partially developed areas in outlying sections of the city, in the newer subdivisions, or in areas where lighting installations are incomplete continually petition or request the council to install street lights at particular locations. In the absence of more objective criteria political expediency may become the basis of council action.

Important factors to consider are installation cost, maintenance cost, and need. The cost items can be readily determined. Where the installation cost is a general charge against the city, officials will exercise more care in determining whether a light is justified at a particular location than when this cost is met by special assessments or by the privately owned utility company. But maintenance costs are financed from the general fund even if the city does not pay the installation charge.

The cost factor must be considered in relation to need. Some kind of priority system is essential. One basis for such a system is police records of night crimes of types that might be reduced with better illumination. Such crimes include rape, homicide, robbery, and auto theft. Likewise in determining lighting for traffic-ways, considerable weight is given to the number of traffic accidents and fatalities.

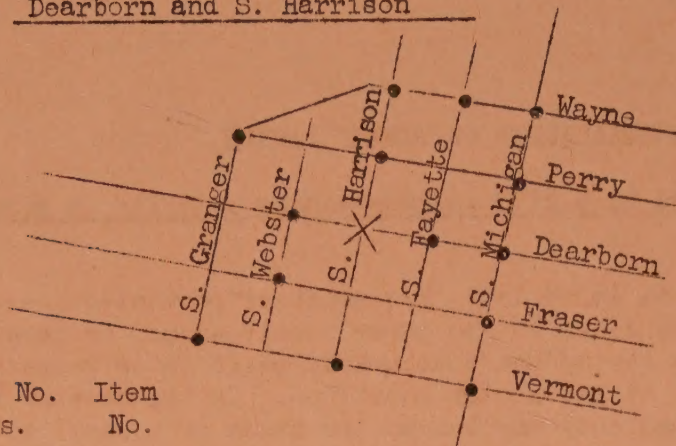
These and other factors are considered in a formula developed by one city (Saginaw, Mich.). Like many other cities, Saginaw found it necessary to limit expenditures for installation and maintenance of new street lights. Most cities get more requests for lights than they are able to finance. In order to determine fairly where lights are most needed, a formula and investigation report which gives special weight to traffic and crime records is used. Eleven items are considered (see investigation report form on next page) and a weight of from two to five points is allotted to each item. These weights are indicated in the first column, "standard no. of points", on the form. A city employee, on the basis of an inspection trip and office records, makes out the investigation report, including a sketch of the area for two blocks surrounding the location where the street light is requested.

The form on the reverse side has been filled in with data on an actual request for a light. The last column on the form shows the number of points charged against each item. If the total number of points is 25 or more, Saginaw city officials believe the city is warranted in placing a light at the location requested. In the example illustrated on the form, it will be noted that a total of 32 points were allotted to the location marked "X" in the drawing. A large amount of crime in the vicinity apparently was the deciding factor.

The Saginaw procedure can be readily adapted for use in other cities. It may be desirable in some cities to change the number of points assigned to the several factors. Perhaps some city has devised a better formula. City officials are invited to send their comments and suggestions to MIS.

(Over)



STREET LIGHT INVESTIGATIONLocation Dearborn and S. HarrisonPetition No. A - 4676Date Filed 2/24/48

• Lights already on

X Requested light

Standard No. of Pts.	Item No.	No. of Pts. Allotted in Investigation
5	1. Housing concentration: Heavy <u>X</u> . Medium _____. Light ____.	<u>5</u>
2	2. Large trees in vicinity? Yes <u>X</u> . No ____.	<u>2</u>
5	3. <u>Church</u> , school or other public building in vicinity? Yes <u>X</u> . No _____. If "Yes", underline which one.	<u>5</u>
3	4. Near a railroad crossing? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>0</u>
2*	5. Traffic record at requested location? Yes <u>X</u> . No _____. If "Yes", list accidents for past three years giving date and type. 4/19/47 - 2:00 A.M. Two vehicles, improper turn.	<u>2</u>
5*	6. Crime record in vicinity? Yes <u>X</u> . No _____. If "Yes", explain: 1947 - 2 Property Damage, 1 Prowler, 1 Larceny; 1946 - Breaking and Entering, 1 Larceny, 1 Prowler; 1945 - 1 Breaking and Entering, 1 Property Damage.	<u>13</u>
5	7. Main thoroughfare? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>0</u>
5	8. Bus stop? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>0</u>
5	9. Fire alarm box? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>0</u>
5	10. A light one block to the north? Yes <u>X</u> . No ____.	<u>0</u>
5	A light one block to the south? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>5</u>
5	A light one block to the east? Yes <u>X</u> . No ____.	<u>0</u>
5	A light one block to the west? Yes <u>X</u> . No ____.	<u>0</u>
<u>3</u>	11. Block more than 500 feet long? Yes _____. No <u>X</u> .	<u>0</u>
60		32

\*Add 1 point for each additional accident or crime.

Approved: 3/24/48 Date

Denied \_\_\_\_\_ Date

By: C. H. P. (City Manager)Ordered on March 29, 1948 Date